

995-CHOWU

Date: 2 October 1950

SUBJECT: General Andras ZAKO

TO: Chief, VLKIVA  
Washington, D. C.

INFO: Chief, PEMIGHT

ATTN: ☐ ☐

Reference:

1. The attached information on above named subject is forwarded for your information.

2. This group has doubtless been under consideration previously in the Agency. If you have any operational interest in the group requiring our attention, we will be pleased to have your instructions in the matter.

1 Encl: (H.W.)  
Rpt on Subject (3)

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SOURCES METHOD EXEMPTION 3828  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2006

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ZAKO, General Andras and Group

As a result of a preliminary field investigation made on the above named group by [ ] the following information is submitted:

1. The Austrian Intelligence files were searched and indicated:

a. General Andras ZAKO to be born on 23 March 1898 in BRASSO, Hungary. From October 1944 subject was reported to have been the head of Department II (A/C of S, G-2) of the Hungarian General Staff. ZAKO's deputy was one Captain Miklos KORPONAY, who had been assigned to Department II by special orders from the Hungarian Prime Minister SZALASI. ZAKO was leader of the organization "KOPJAS" (name of a Hungarian ancient weapon). This organization was dedicated to organize a special combat intelligence group whose mission was to infiltrate the Russian front to gather information and to commit acts of sabotage.

In March 1945 when the Soviet Spring offensive started, the Hungarian General Staff instructed ZAKO to dispatch small groups of five to six members to areas which were to be occupied by the Soviets with orders to wait for future orders. At that time the number was 1500-2000 well-trained and equipped men. ZAKO himself went into Germany where he was interned by the U.S. and later extradited to Hungary as a war criminal. He escaped and went to lower Austria where he worked as an agricultural worker under an assumed name until 1947 when he went to Innsbruck, Tyrol, French Zone of Austria. KORPONAY, together with eight officers and about fifteen soldiers, went to Austria. Here, after being interned for a short period of time, they settled in a DP camp named Kellerberg, Carinthia, in the British Zone of Austria.

The KOPJAS group, which at that time had no contact with ZAKO, remained inactive until the spring of 1946. At this time Sander LANG, a naturalized British citizen of Hungarian origin and a member of the British Intelligence, who was officially charged by the Allies with the repatriation of Hungarian refugees, asked KORPONAY if he had some reliable men who could be sent into Hungary with the repatriation transports, to gather information with which they would then return to him in Austria. KORPONAY furnished him with the men and from this time on KORPONAY and his group provided both the British and the French with intelligence information gathered from the same sources.

In 1947 ZAKO had again taken over the leadership of the KOPJAS movement and plans were made to contact the U.S. Intelligence establishments. CIC Sub-detachment at Hallein was contacted and accepted the proposal. Lt. Col. Georgy KOLLENYI was appointed their representative. They were later dropped by CIC because they were furnishing identical information to the American, British and French at the same time while each thought they were getting it exclusively. Shortly thereafter KOLLENYI was employed by TIB headquarters in Salzburg. He was still reported employed by TIB in August 1950.

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In October 1947 KORPONAY contacted Salzburg CIC and stated General ZAKO would have the former members of KOPJAS in all parts of the world rally behind him if called upon to fight Communism in the event of a war. He stated he was sorry both the English and the Americans refused to continue to accept the services of his group. KORPONAY then returned to Innsbruck, French Zone of Austria, where he and ZAKO resided.

Following this ZAKO and KORPONAY intensified their contact with the French, but during the period January to July 1948, they also contacted many G-2 agencies, including American intelligence agency in Frankfurt, Germany (TIE).

KORPONAY was once threatened with arrest by the French for selling valuable intelligence information provided instead of using it for anti-Communist resistance movement under which pretext he obtained the information. Later the French discovered he sold the information to another power.

ZAKO was satisfied to keep in the background and allow KORPONAY to assume complete control of KOPJAS organization. ZAKO played with the idea of becoming the future War Minister of Hungary. He soon realized this to be an unlikely ambition, since his group was known as an organization of extreme rightists who followed Hitler's racial and nationalistic lines. Therefore, most of the post-1945 Hungarian exiles were afraid to identify themselves with him, because they in turn were afraid to lose the support of their various political contacts among the Western European countries and the U.S. Many, however, retained secret contact with ZAKO.

It is reported that ZAKO maintains a direct contact with the Small Holders Party now living in Paris, one Hadju-Wemeth LASZLO, who is expected to be nominated in the near future as the European representative of the National Committee in all military matters and who is a very close friend of Tabor SCHARDT, a Hungarian politician under the HORTHY regime and one of ZAKO supporters.

In a meeting between Hadju-Wemeth LASZLO and ZAKO in early February 1950, ZAKO explained that he believed personal contact with the French to be more advantageous than a contact with the Americans and listed four reasons.

ZAKO allegedly received three million French francs from the French intelligence in October 1949 for the organization of a Hungarian penetration net.

In January 1950 one Attila KOVACS, one of the better intelligence operators in KORPONAY's organization was murdered in Innsbruck by one Kiklos Josef BOGNAR. Since French intelligence operators had warned both ZAKO, and KORPONAY only a few days before that according to their information BOGNAR was a Communist penetration agent and since this warning was completely ignored, the French discontinued the intelligence net. After this they used the services of the ZAKO group for minor intelligence missions. ZAKO now concentrated his efforts on the development of "so-called MAGYAR HARCOSOK BYLARSZ KOEZESEGE" (Hungarian Warriors Comradeship Association-MHBK), an organization originally

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founded by KOPFJAS in 1946 and of which ZAKO is still the official leader. They publish a newspaper called "HADA VERJAS" (The Road of the Army) printed in Munich, Germany. Funds come from voluntary contributions by the members of the organization and the sale of membership badges (for five schillings each). ZAKO's personal idea relative to the organization of the MHBK appears to be that since the KOPFJAS movement has gained a rather doubtful reputation with most of the Western powers, he will use the less obtrusive MHBK to again approach the Western powers under a new disguise.

A mass meeting of the MHBK was held in Munich on 15 July 1950 under the leadership of ZAKO. Attending this meeting were representatives from France, Belgium, Germany and Austria. ZAKO opened the meeting by stating that the time had come for world-wide organization of the MHBK to establish the actual purpose of the organization. A resolution was made to card and register all members. A committee composed of former high-ranking Hungarian officers will be nominated later to assist ZAKO in the leadership of the organization. It was also decided that the organization is to be changed into an organization of volunteers in which everyone would have equal rights and nobody would keep his old rank. This discards the old idea that they were the legal heirs to the so-called "HUNGARIAN ARMY" (the members of the Hungarian Army who fought during World War II under the leadership of Regent HORTHY). Immediately after the meeting ZAKO allegedly notified several of his followers that he had received written messages from both Admiral HORTHY and Austrian Chancellor GYTJ advising him and all other former Hungarian soldiers to reorganize the "National Committee" in New York as the only legal representation of the Hungarian emigration.

The leader of MHBK in Salzburg, Austria is one General Lajos BURGOSZ, presently living at Plainstrasse, Salzburg. Also at present MHBK has an official representative in the United States with headquarters in New York City under the leadership of Laszlo BAKI, who has registered with the U.S. Attorney General under the name of "Collegial Society of Hungarian Veterans."

b. It is reported the Brotherhood of Comrades-in-Arms is an association of former Hungarian Army Officers and has headquarters in Innsbruck, Austria, and Munich, Germany, with some members in Paris and other parts of France. This association's politics are right of center. The Brotherhood was organized by General Andras ZAKO and Captain Miklos KIK ARNAK on orders from General Ferenc KOSSARNAKI-PARKAS and is composed by a staff of career officers who have remained in Western Europe since the war. Most of its sympathizers are refugees who have been in Western Europe since 1945 and are now fairly well established although the Brotherhood has limited financial resources. The Brotherhood is well organized and therefore attracts most of the young Hungarian emigres officially; it rejects Fascism and claims to be a non-partisan group although it is known to foster Arrow Cross elements. In order to enhance its reputation, the Brotherhood has invited well-known Liberals, such as Miklos LAZAR, former editor, to be its counselors. The Brotherhood maintains strict control over the intelligence activities of its members and their liaison with military officials of the Western Powers. This report also stated "It is believed that KIK ARNAK's present relationship in the Brotherhood stems from his past dealings

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with Andras ZAKO. ZAKO was an instructor at the Ledovics Academy in Budapest, when KISBARNAKI-FARKAS was the Academy director. When KISBARNAKI-FARKAS was appointed Commanding General of the Sixth Military District at Debrecen, ZAKO was appointed his Chief of Staff, a position which he held until the end of the war. KISBARNAKI-FARKAS and ZAKO fled Hungary to Innsbruck, Austria where they started to organize a group of Hungarian emigres in Austria and Germany. In 1946 at the convocation of Hungarian emigres at Landsbut, Germany, KISBARNAKI-FARKAS proclaimed himself Prime Minister and Minister of Defense of the Hungarian Government in exile. He assigned ZAKO the task of organizing all former Hungarian officers then in the Occupation Zones of Austria and Germany into an autonomous organization which would be solely responsible to ZAKO. ZAKO's organization is now known as the Brotherhood of Comrades-in-Arms (BAJTARSI-KOZOSJESU). ZAKO has allegedly promised KISBARNAKI-FARKAS, the Brotherhood will be at the disposal of a Hungarian Committee of Liberation in the event it is needed."

c. Another intelligence report stated: "French plans call for a Hungarian intelligence group consisting of 100-200 men headed by Andras ZAKO; most of these men are now stationed in the American Zone of Germany and Austria. This group is also to include an offensive intelligence unit, the aim of which would be to penetrate the officers of the new Hungarian Army."

This report also stated "ZAKO is resentful of KISBARNAKI-FARKAS's political maneuvering and has requested that he (FARKAS) consider himself primarily a soldier. ZAKO maintains that once they are back in Hungary, they can have a political regime of their own choice and there is no point in playing politics now." ZAKO has been instructed by French officials to select his agents from only long-time opponents of Communism. There is no objection to former Arrow-Cross members nor to persons with American contacts, but all activities must be thoroughly controlled by the French I.S.

This report further stated "While the French I.S. seeks to win support of Hungarian emigres by claiming that the Americans failed for a long time to offer such emigres any assistance, the French are well aware that it is impossible to avoid American knowledge of their operations. Karoly NEY, a former KOPJAS leader and MADAS, for example were expelled from ZAKO's organization because they were suspected of working for the American I.S. in Austria. ZAKO has complained on several occasions that he does not have an adequate flow of intelligence reports. Source believes that the French officials single out ZAKO's men for direct contact so that main reports are received directly by the French without passing through the Hungarian staff."

2. A search of the KGCOW intelligence files reveals the following report, dated 13 October 1949, on the KOPJAS organization:

a. General Andras or Andras ZAKO, under the direct of the Hungarian General Staff, formed in 1944 the organization "KOPJA". Intelligence and sabotage were designated as the primary missions of the unit, with possible activation as a partisan group in the event of Hungary's capitulation. This organization, except to a small degree, was never actually functional prior to the end of the war.

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b. In 1946, ZAKO is reported to have returned to Hungary from his exile in Austria and to have reorganized the KOPJAS as a positive intelligence group. He returned to Austria in 1947 and conducted a recruiting campaign for this organization from among the ranks of former Hungarian army and gendarmerie personnel in Germany and Austria. During 1947, and 1948, ZAKO travelled extensively throughout Europe establishing connections with other Hungarian exile groups and seeking support from Western power intelligence organizations for the KOPJAS. ZAKO established connections with ex-General Ferenc FARKAS in late 1947, but severed this connection almost completely due to heavy penetration of the AHEM (Anti-Bolshevist Hungarian Liberation Movement) by pro-Soviet sympathizers. After his break with FARKAS, ZAKO is reported to have established connections between the KOPJAS and the Hungarian National Committee. This alleged affiliation has never been verified. ZAKO moved from Kallersburg, Austria (British Zone) to Absam, by Solbad Hall, Tyrol, Austria (French Zone) in early 1949. Since his move to the French Zone, numerous reports have been received which indicate that French intelligence has been financing his activities. Should this be true, it implies that the French are receiving similar data to that being provided U.S. Intelligence by other KOPJAS members. The KOPJAS is presently maintaining a positive intelligence net within Hungary. Data forthcoming from this net is relayed via an intricate courier system to both ZAKO and to various liaison officers appointed by U.S. Intelligence Agencies to the KOPJAS group. ZAKO is in all probability also supplying this data to French intelligence authorities at a clear profit.

c. Another report, dated 2 June 1948, reported that Ferenc FARKAS and ZAKO appeared at the U.S. Consulate General in Munich on 19 March 1948 and offered a proposal for the organization of an Eastern-European Anti-Soviet Intelligence Service. At the same time, they complained about the manner in which U.S. Intelligence agencies were conducting operations in Hungary.

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